

ARTGAZE

townsville's arts magazine

summer





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[kop-ee-rahyt]

—noun

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Shoot from the Hip

Pinnacles Gallery

4 December 2010 – 30 January 2011

Responding to demands of the ever growing Lomography enthusiasts of Townsville, Pinnacles Gallery hosts its inaugural Lomography competition *Shoot from the Hip*. The first prize of \$1500 will be judged by Sydney Lomographer Tim Hixson, with prizes announced at the opening celebration. Hixson is renowned for his Lomography or 'plastic camera photography'.

The *Shoot from the Hip* competition entries are complimented by a number of works by local and national Lomographers.

Public Programs:

Shoot From the Hip: Copyright Matters

6pm to 8pm Wednesday 8 December 2010

Arts Law solicitor Jo Teng presents an informative talk about all things copyright; from the use of images and samples of digital media and film, to what your rights are as an artist, or as someone using artworks, in order to protect yourself.

Lomo Portraits under the Rain Trees

10am to 5pm Saturday 11 December 2010

Have Gallery staff members Leah McManus and Louise Middleton take your individual or family portraits under the scenic Rain Trees at Riverway Arts Centre using a Diana Mini 35mm camera.

\$15 gets you 3 negatives and one photo printed at 13 x 10 inches on matt photo paper, a one of kind gift just in time for Christmas.



Tim Hixson, *Beach #69*, 1997, Holga

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL AS PLACES ARE LIMITED

Please contact the Gallery directly:

(07) 4773 8871

pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au

www.townsville.qld.gov.au



note from the editor

This issue includes the International new media competition, Screengrab, held at eMerge Media Space, the Matt Clarke Travelling Scholarship recipients, an interview with Kiwi street artist and printmaker, Mini Graff, at the 7th Australian Print Symposium, an interview with Tabi Sari at the Mission Evolve Music Festival, Artspaced Inc celebrates it's first twelve months and focuses on contemporary edgy artwork for 2011, and more.

Renew Townsville is gaining momentum and you can keep up to date with info about local artists moving into spaces around town on their website (<http://renewtownsville.com>). If your not heading away for the festive season, check out the arts guide on page 12 as there are plenty of events in Townsville to keep us inspired over summer.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to *Art Gaze* magazine, and enjoy.

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Tabi Sari at the Mission Evolve Music Festival



Detail of *Crows, The Blood Next Door*, 2009.
Image courtesy of Artspaced Inc.



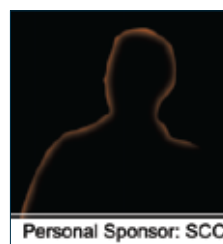
Taylah Smith in detail of photograph
by Robin Gauld from *Richard III*

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Contact the publisher to find out how to support *Art Gaze* and what personal sponsorship could mean for you.

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Tabi Sari on left with community members at the Mission Evolve Music Festival. Photograph by Ken Chow

TABI SARI and his Mission to Evolve

SENOVA PARIS

The YouTube story of the little engine that rolled over 300 km!

A few months ago, a relatively unknown musician decided to load up the old car and head north. Being unknown, Tabi Sari has a good following developing as he plays gigs in various places in north Queensland.

'To be honest, in the beginning I didn't know what I was doing. All I wanted to do was play music and try something fresh. I really couldn't believe my luck when I scored regular gigs at a café overlooking the beach in Port Douglas. A chef that worked at the café had purchased my demo CD and was playing it while he worked. There was a smile from ear to ear when the manager invited me to play, promising not only money, but also food from the menu and iced coffee. I love iced coffee, it was a little dream come true!'

After three months playing guitar in Port Douglas, the musical stint was

somewhat completed with his first appearance at the Mission Evolve Music Festival. The tropical style of Tabi Sari went down as a real treat. The festival was located near Mission Beach, in the middle of Australia's largest remaining population of cassowaries.

'I've never really been to a style of festival like this before. It was pumping! The bands were mostly local to north Queensland, with a few independent artists that tour here regularly. On the way to the festival, my little car clicked over 300,000 km. I grew up with this car. It's old and I've had heaps of trouble with it recently. I thought it might die soon. I was proud of my car when it finally reached a new milestone. With some irony, it happened on my way to Mission Evolve. I took some photos of it, and made a little photo/video about it and put it up on YouTube. The response has been positive and supportive!'

Although he is born and raised in north Queensland, the name Tabi Sari actually

comes from Vanuatu. He was given the name when he travelled to his friend's village, where he stayed with the family for a short time.

'At first they wanted to set up the room with electricity and other comforts from home, but I told them it wasn't needed. It was a real eye opener to see people living their lives completely differently to the way I live mine. They live what I would consider a grounded life. They live off the land and grow their own food sustainably. They work hard, but they laugh and have fun when doing it. We taught the kids different games and I learned some of theirs. They were welcoming and even though two years has past, I still feel connected to them as my extended family.'

To see what the fuss is about, Google 'Tabi Sari Mission Evolve'. Or you can also contact Tabi Sari on Facebook or go to <www.myspace.com/tabisari>.

MATT CLARKE *Travelling Scholarship*



From left: Kyana Pike, Roger Butler, Jon Bradshaw, Pauline Plumb and Mini Graff

Jon Bradshaw and Kyana Pike recently returned home from Canberra and I caught up with Jon to ask him about the trip.

Where did you travel and what did you attend?

We recently travelled to the 7th Australian Print Symposium held at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. Kyana Pike and I were successful applicants of the Matt Clarke Travelling Scholarship.

What was the highlight of the trip?

There were many highlights throughout, including talks from Robert Jacks,

who talked about the use of rubber stamp prints to make mail art and artist books. One of the founding members of sticky institute, Luke Sinclair, talked about 'zine' culture in the digital age, and Angela Cavalieri talked about her exploration of 'text as image' and showed the process of creating her large-scale linocuts. Also, I enjoyed the chicken and avocado sandwiches, cupcakes and free mints.

How did this impact on your arts practice?

Throughout the three days we were able to make a lot of contacts from all around Australia and also gain some insight into what they were doing within their arts

career. I was particularly interested in the workshops and residencies on offer within printmaking. Some artists who I met mentioned their involvement with places such as Megalo Print Studios. This has inspired me to apply for residencies at places that have these opportunities on offer to further my skills in printmaking, particularly in screen printing. Also I'm inspired to continue travelling and experience more of the arts and culture in other cities.

I would like to thank La Luna Youth Arts, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery and Matt Clarke's family for supporting us for this event.

Interview with STREET ARTIST and PRINTMAKER Mini Graff

JON BRADSHAW

During the Megalo Print Studio and Gallery exhibition opening *PRINT BIG*, in Canberra, I was able to catch up with one of the featured artists in the exhibition, Mini Graff. While having a brief chat with Mini, like a quick-draw gunslinger, she whips out and passes me one of her screen-printed adhesives: a sticker printed with the text 'KRAFTY'. This 'KRAFTY' Sydney-based street artist indeed has definitely made her mark in the art world and with her ongoing mural projects, commissions and collaborations, exhibiting in galleries and on the street, her works are

constantly getting bigger and better. She prints and stencils onto walls, boards, vinyl and wallpaper, incorporating her iconic 'running couple'—Joe and Josephine—throughout.

As one of the guest speakers at the 7th Australian Printmakers Symposium, Mini tells us about her recent workings within the printmaking world.

You're prolific in many areas within the art world, from street art, stencilling, public murals, to printmaking. When and how did it all start?

My interest in street art stemmed from my time visiting San Francisco in 1998. The mural works of the Chicano Art Mural Movement of the 1970s, located in The Mission district, were awe-inspiring—technically well-executed stories told with passion and reason. Since then, my practice has led me to explore many methods of producing my work, but it seems they all fall under the umbrella of printmaker.

Screen printing has obviously been a main area within your printmaking practice.

What do you like about screen printing?

Everything! I enjoy creating CMYK works and experimenting with frequency and tonal variation of my CMYK mix. I love the texture of a printed work—the ink on the surface of the paper. How quickly I can bring an idea to fruition—sometimes within a day!

Since seeing your recent work (Suburban Roadhouse No. 8) at the Megalo Print Big exhibition, it was amazing to see such a large work as a screen print. What inspired you to do this work at such a large scale?

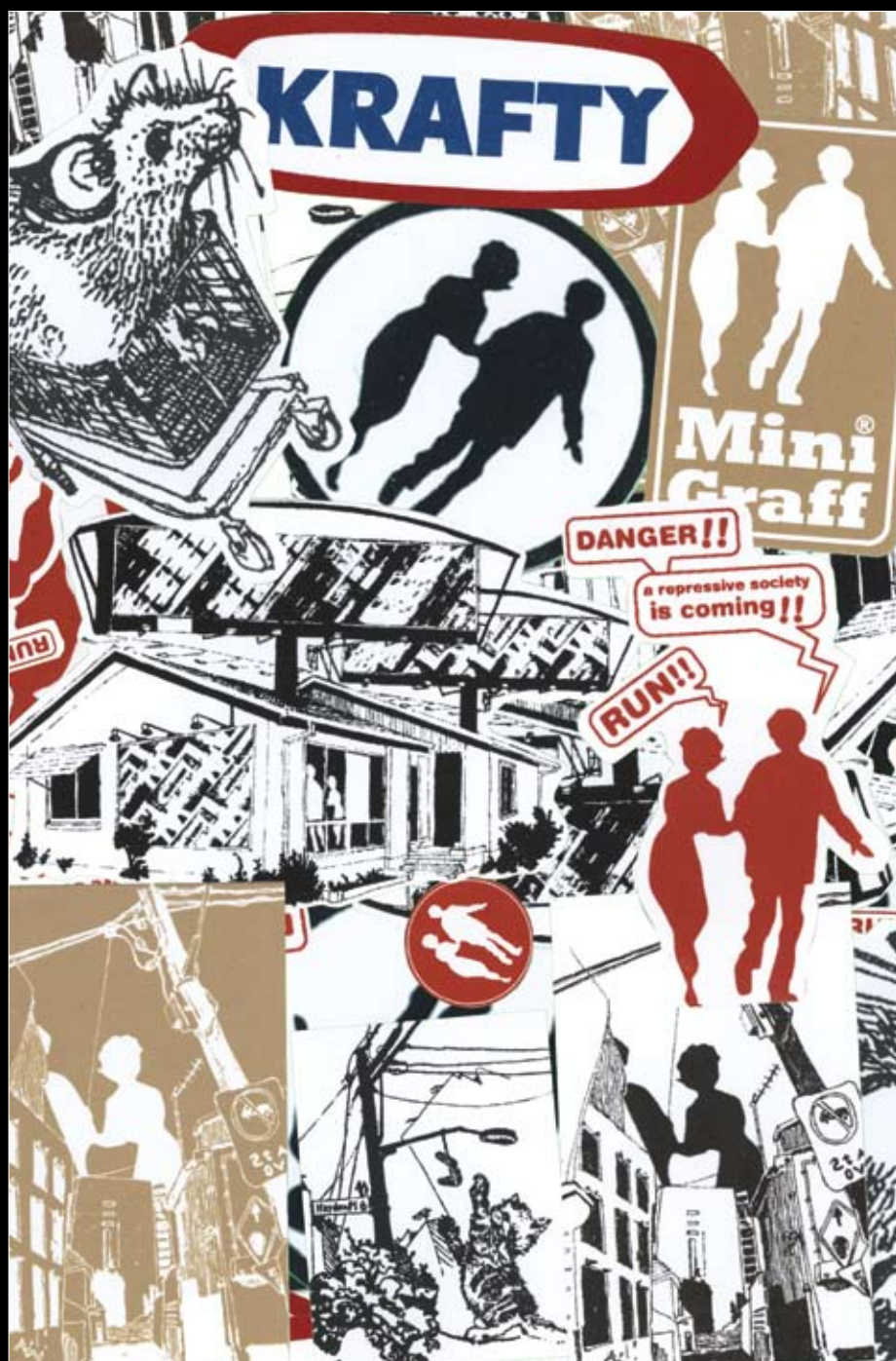
Print Big was curated by Alison Alder, artist and director of Megalo, who invited the artists to participate based on their experience working in a large format. Although I had not screen printed such a large work, many of my previous projects had well exceeded the 4.6 x 3.6 metre exhibition area. The artwork comprised 20 panels, printed CMYK, so four screens are printed for each panel. I purchased four large, new screens specifically for the production of the print. I made/printed a total of 88 screens, as I made two mistakes while printing. It was great to go through the process and gave me an insight into how commercial screen printers would have worked, back in their day.

Through your characters Joe and Josephine, there's a link to industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss. Is there anything to mention about this designer that is reflected in your work?

Every artist should have a first edition copy of *Symbol Sourcebook: An Authoritative Guide to International Graphic Symbols*. I have referenced his work in my 2005 MAY'S Lane artwork *You, me and the Milk Create* <http://www.minigraff.com/mg_mays.html>. Dreyfuss created the characters Joe and Josephine to represent the perfect anatomical couple for purposes of ergonomic design of domestic items. I had been using the 'running couple' within my practice since 2004 and it wasn't until 2008 that I named them Joe and Josephine as a homage to Dreyfuss.

What interests you most about these characters?

Joe and Josephine respond to the world around them. They are perfectly suited



Detail of work by Mini Graff

to run towards or away from situations and work equally as well in large or mini scale. I can add speech bubbles or place them on billboards or flyers—each application conveys a different message using a simple graphic intervention.

Who are some artists you have been influenced or inspired by?

Alison Alder, political poster maker extraordinaire; Chuck Close, the patience of a saint; simply amazing Martin Sharp, Fiona Hall, Peter Burgess, Banksy (yes, Banksy), Philip Wolfhagen, Georgia O'Keeffe and Christo and Jeanne-Claude. It's hard to list all of my influences as I'm constantly

meeting inspiring artists. These are just a few whose work I've recently seen and been inspired by.

What's been one of your favourite projects or artworks you've worked on?

Suburban Roadhouse No. 8 has been a stand-out so far, although it seems each project I work on is more interesting and rewarding than the previous.

You mentioned you were working at the National Art School in Sydney. What have you been doing there?

I'm lecturing in the print department—a 2nd year paper titled 'Painterly Print',

with a focus on mono printing using the screen. We're also working at setting up my Adana 8/5 in the studio there for students to have access to. Hopefully we'll be ready to go with that for next semester. Like street art, consistent exposure is key.

In saying that, you've managed to keep yourself busy this past year: your residencies at the Megalo Print Studio and at Hill End Press, as well as having work in the Space Invaders exhibition at the National Gallery of Australia. How

do you keep up with it all?

It can be difficult to keep all the 'balls in the air' but it helps that each of the institutions and studios that I've worked with have great support staff. Megalo has an excellent team and facilities. The Hill End residency, managed by the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, was also a great experience. I worked closely with Hill End Press printers, Genevieve and Bill Moseley, to get the best results from the print and we are planning another collaboration print later on this

year. The National Gallery, especially assistant curator Jaklyn Babington, have also been terrific to deal with. Things are pretty busy at the moment—it would be great to have a full-time studio assistant.

And what's next for Mini?

I'm heading back to New Zealand for a couple of weeks, so it will be great to reconnect with my homeland. I will continue developing my Roadhouse Series in both stencil and screen print.

Artspaced Inc.

INITIATIVE , EXPERIMENTATION, ENGAGEMENT

In case you have newly arrived in Townsville or had your head buried under a proverbial pillow, wake up sleepy heads! We need your support! Yes, that's right folks; it's good for the soul and the artist in everyone to support your hard-working arts initiatives. Artspaced Inc. is a non-profit, incorporated arts organisation that is located within and operates with the support of Dancenorth, Queensland's

leading contemporary dance company. Artspaced Inc. provides an exhibition space for new work by emerging and established visual artists and curators. If you would like to make a note of somewhere exciting and different to meet like-minded arts lovers, Artspaced Inc. openings are relaxed and friendly affairs open to the public. Artspaced Inc. contact details can be found waiting to be appreciated lovingly by you at

the bottom of this article. We need you to become a valued Artspaced Inc. member, dear reader. Read on to find out why!

The Artspaced Inc. Artist-Run Initiative aims to provide mentorship and experience in contemporary visual arts practice through peer support to active artists and to engage in deconstructing traditional modes of thinking about art



Happy Noel, The Blood Next Door, 2010. Image courtesy of Artspaced Inc.

and culture. Artspaced Inc. provides an exhibition space for new work with a focus on experimental and new media work; assists with grant applications and funding in relation to exhibitions at the space; collaborates globally and nationally with other artist-run initiatives, such as the Paris new media collective *The Blood Next Door*; and supports challenged communities and groups through arts-based projects.

Through several key grants awarded to us in 2009–10, Artspaced Inc. has become recognised by our peers and key arts organisations as a hard-working arts initiative. In 2009, Artspaced Inc. received a substantial Artist-Run Initiative grant from Arts Queensland for the exhibition, *To Die For: Tales of the Uncanny*. The exhibition was a great accomplishment for Artspaced Inc., exhibiting 21 local and national artists, and featuring new media and organic artworks, as well as a one-night only short film festival. The combination and diversity of works and the collective effect they produced overcame the challenge of sharing Dancenorth's working spaces, and all the available nooks and crannies were put to good use.

In 2009, Artspaced Inc. also curated *Palm Island Youth*, an exhibition documenting arts projects involving young people on Palm Island, where many of the key artists involved at Artspaced Inc. have worked and stayed in the community while assisting with different arts projects. Palm Island is as unique and beautiful as the people

who live there and we were honoured to showcase their young people's projects. This exhibition fulfilled the objectives of Artspaced Inc. to support art workers and the arts projects in disadvantaged communities and to operate as an inclusive art space.

Artspaced Inc. has curated and organised 28 events and exhibitions in total during 2009–10 and 2011 is looking exciting, with some innovative projects and exhibitions confirmed already. Artspaced Inc. events and exhibitions have also showcased the talents of young local musicians, some of whom have gone on to travel internationally or feature as Triple J Unearthed finds, such as one of our favourites, the Popli Kids, who recently featured as Triple J Unearthed artists. The Popli Kids rounded off our last event/exhibition for 2010, *Undergrind*, in style, supported by Huxley and Tekn0KoviC Simon Petkovic. Many of the musicians and DJs and their audiences who have supported Artspaced Inc. exhibitions and events for the last two years are also emerging or practising artists and represent a new generation of cultural explorers.

Artspaced Inc. welcomes artists of all generations who share a common love of contemporary, edgy art and events. We at Artspaced Inc. are definitely obsessed with the notion of living, breathing and creating art. Artspaced Inc. relies on volunteer staff and so it is truly a labour of love for those involved, but we do strive to pay ourselves and our artists and performers as much and

as often as possible through innovative events.

One of our favourite initiators, Marcus Westbury of Renew Newcastle fame, commented that he believes in 'the power of initiative, experimentation, entrepreneurship and innovation' (Creative Initiative, 2009). These quoted ideals mirror those of our Artspaced Inc. team. Thank you to the incoming board, Artspaced Inc. arts curator Shane Keen, volunteers, supporters and sponsors, especially Horizon Gourmet Meats, the Townsville Brewery, and other arts organisations such as La Luna, *Art Gaze* and Dancenorth, who have supported us during the last two years since our transformation from 'a little white space' at the Townsville Brewery to Artspaced Inc. at Dancenorth.

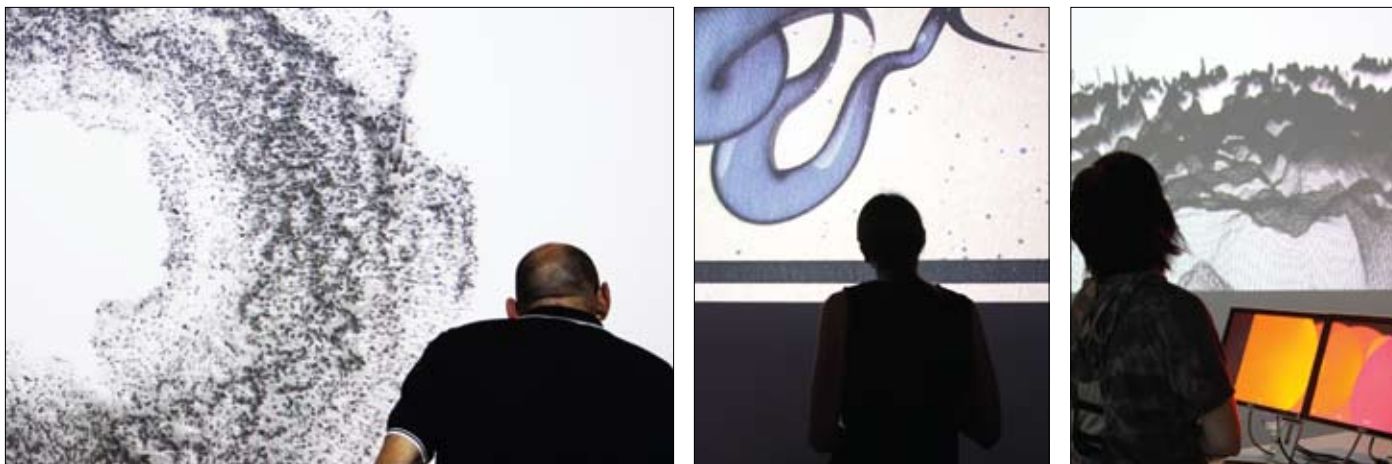
Artspaced Inc. welcomes new volunteers, sponsors, curators, photographers, musicians, new media practitioners and filmmakers. Please get in touch and get involved! Support Artspaced Artist-Run Initiative in bringing art to the people.

Jeanette Hutchinson,
Director, Artspaced Inc.

Contact Artspaced Inc.
0416 980 323
artspace@gmail.com
Find Artspaced Inc on Facebook



Crows, *The Blood Next Door*, 2009. Image courtesy of Artspaced Inc.



Installation views of Screengrab, Courtesy of eMerge Media Space

SCREENGRAB: *THE NETWORK*

eMerge Media Space

GEMMA BAUMAN

It was like stepping into another dimension—a room full of bright screens, flashes of light and glimpses of interpretation. I couldn't help but feel a little anxious as I delved into the digital pieces. This overwhelming feeling made it hard to ignore the question: where do we stand in the network and what does it represent?

This year's Screengrab exhibition, at James Cook University's eMerge Media Space, explored this very theme, *The Network*. This was perfect for the tech-savvy space and, whether it was the social or the family network, the theme was interpreted from various angles by a selection of national and international artists.

First, stepping into the digital space was like viewing a house intricately covered with Christmas lights—you needed a second to take it all in. Large projector screens coupled with a stack of six box televisions dominated the space; this was complemented by a line of computer screens extending from the ceiling. Individual platforms, each with a computer, provided an intimate viewing time for the viewer with the digital art. However, nothing could quite compete with the interactive piece largely projected onto one of the walls. Its main attraction was its game element, being able to interact by using an Xbox controller. Whether you were a gamer or not, it was hard to resist grabbing the

control as if you were a pro, moving the projection around and getting lost in its dimensions.

Scale was also an interesting factor of the Screengrab exhibition, although each piece stood soundly in its own right. The piece that stood out in the eyes of the judges was *Fluid Network*, by Juliana Gotilla and Izabel Rainer Harbach. This piece successfully portrayed the global connection via the network and the boundaries that are broken down in the process. With such a fluid network, boundaries and distances disappeared before our eyes, but the calm visuals matched well with the anxious sounds of dial-up, Internet, Skype, email and messenger. But, despite taking home the new media arts prize, it did divide the judges thoughts on whether it was created using traditional forms of art or digital technology. The interaction was interesting to watch, but it was clear that anxiety was a common feeling. When thinking about the network, one participant replied, 'I am one pixel', suggesting that not only are we very small part of the network, but that technology is driving us.

While the exhibition had a worldly feel, it would have been refreshing to have a local piece in contrast. As far as new media is concerned though, not only were the audiences' eyes and ears absorbing the content, but

I also found myself grabbing for the nearest computer mouse, camera or controller. I wanted to be a part of each collection of digital media, I wanted to get to know it and understand it. One piece, in particular, that drew my attention was *What They Said* by Alan Bigelow. As I grabbed for the computer mouse and scrolled along the page, I was confronted by flickering images, emotive music and powerful text. The commentary on mass media took a raw approach towards its production and the concise statements had a shock value. It was not only visually entertaining, it made you think.

Overall, the exhibition was captivating—stimulating both body and mind. Not only did it allow you to glide past in awe but also to get lost—eyes and ears absorbed in the quirky and mechanical wonders. But, nothing could deny the question that this exhibition unleashed: are we just a speck in the network, or are we the puppeteer driving its existence?



ARTIST PROFILE

Carole Howlett

Carole Howlett, Photographed by Louise Middleton

Carole Howlett joined the Townsville Art Society in 2009 and has gained great respect for her ability to adapt to varying mediums.

I was born in 1968 and raised in the diverse 'capital of culture', city of Liverpool, England. What a privilege it was to have such wonderful art galleries to behold, all within easy reach. This suited me fine, having always had a strong enthusiasm for art and a passion for painting and drawing.

It wasn't difficult to see how those endless hours spent as a child drawing led me to pursuing art through school, then on to obtain a Diploma and BA(HONS) in Fine Art.

After some travelling, I married a Townsvillian and moved over here 14 years ago. Family life then took over and, being a Mum, along with lack of space, unfortunately art took a back seat for a while.

I always wanted and intended to pick up that paint brush again. I just needed that kick start before too many years ticked by.

This all changed, thanks to a pivotal moment a couple of years ago when we had a large shed built in the garden.

Hey presto, some creative space to set my artistic senses tingling again.

I love the use of colour and the texture of oil paint to create and depict mood and make a painting come to life.

I enjoy the discipline involved in drawing, whether it's pencil, charcoal or pastel. The use of expressive marks to exaggerate certain aspects of a subject appeals to me.

Being part of a two-person show recently, titled *Meek and Wild*, gave me an interesting theme to sink my teeth into. My keenness for this subject grew as I tried to connect the presence and character of an animal, to the portrayal and interpretation displayed, in art form. Whether it is the innocence of a young seal or the dominance of a bold lion, that luring stare from the wild, as it attempts to captivate the viewer.

This exhibition proved very much a learning curve for me, a springboard, if you like, to develop other ideas. An eagerness was uncovered to learn more and create further.

It certainly is true and satisfying how the more productive I am, the more the ideas seem to flow. Having in the past felt a bit stagnant with art for a while,

it is very gratifying to feel that purpose and that drive to keep working.

Of course, we all sometimes need a little help along the way. When I need that jolt of influence I simply look to some past Masters; in particular, the French Impressionists and Post Impressionists provide me with heaps of inspiration. From Monet's clever use of limited brushwork to suggest weight and mass, to the beautifully balanced and structured works by Cezanne. His contrast of strong, bold verticals against subtle bands and broad areas of colour engage me every time. Also, in my view, the much admired and skilful pastel artist, Edgar Degas, with his powerful use of line and colour, and cropped scenes creating activity beyond the frame. I am always intrigued by how he layered and reworked the pastel to intensify the focus of his work.

Overall, the creative encouragement and stimulus I gain from these Masters of Art, is limitless.

My main pursuit and aim is to make each painting or drawing more interesting than the previous. I only hope people can enjoy and admire my art as much as I enjoy creating it.

LEARNING TO HAVE FUN

Linda Huff & Jenny Finn

JAK HENSON

Allowing ourselves to create artwork using unfamiliar materials can become harder to embrace as we mature. As a child, we'll find anything that can make a mark and create visual masterpieces, whether it be with a crayon on paper, a stick in the sand or mud smeared all over our skin. As we grow older, we refine our skills and start to focus on proportioning, perspective, depth and so on, and over time it is easy to forget the fun aspect that came so naturally as a child.

Bringing fun and experimentation back into their art, local artists Linda Huff and Jenny Finn have created an exhibition based on texture and mixed media. Both artists attended a mixed-media workshop in Cairns at ARTescape with Judy Pomroy and returned to Townsville excited and began their hunt for new art materials, including bubble wrap, gap sealer, onion bags and hessian, to combine with acrylic, ink and oil paint.

Finn recalled a previous workshop she attended, arriving at the venue, prepared with a range of new brushes, and was told that during the workshop she could only use one large fan brush and throw paint onto the canvas. With a background in signwriting, Finn struggled to step away from the more restrained style of painting she was trained in, but has found mixed media one of the more enjoyable mediums to work with.

Finn has spent the last couple of years working on a commission, painting murals in the Children's Ward at Townsville General Hospital. Her artwork has, therefore, been influenced by the vibrancy and fun nature of her murals, and she admits she really enjoys painting children's themes.

In contrast, Huff's painting journey began only three years ago after leaving the workforce. She is currently mixing



Linda Huff, Detail of *Sun Bound*, 2010, Courtesy of the artist

ink and acrylic with textured objects, using methods to drip, brush and spray mediums onto the canvas, creating vibrant and sometimes unexpected results. Although Huff does not consider herself a landscape painter, her work holds an environmental quality, resembling the colours and shapes of desert shrubs or scenes from the beach.

Huff and Finn are members of the Townsville Art Society (TAS) and both agree that their involvement in the group continually inspires them to extend their practice through the opportunities

of attending workshops and the social environment it creates, allowing members of varying experience to share their knowledge. The TAS membership consists of people of all ages in different disciplines and they are welcoming to anyone interested in a social art environment.

The work of Huff and Finn can be viewed at Art on Kings until 23 December.

Further details, ph: 4723 4469



Jenny Finn, *Emus textured*, Courtesy of the artist

Art Guide for SUMMER

Exhibitions

Performances / Talks

Workshops

Date	Event Style	Title / Details	Place
until 24 Dec	Current exhibition	Christmas Show of Small Works by local artists - Art for your heart's desire - exhibiting until 24 December	Sylvia Ditchburn Fine Art Gallery, Shop 7 Metro Quays, 86 Ogden St, CBD Townsville
3 Dec	Exhibition Opening	<i>Batik of Java: poetics and politics</i> , featuring two collections of Indonesian art: batik textiles of North Java from the Greg Roberts and Ian Reed collection, and a series of batik-inspired paintings by contemporary Indonesian artist Dadang Christanto.	Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville
4 Dec	Exhibition Opening	<i>Shoot from the Hip</i> Townsville's inaugural Lomography competition, to be judged by prominent Sydney photographer Tim Hixson	Pinnacles Gallery, Riverway Arts Centre, 20 Village Boulevard, Thuringowa Central
5 Dec	Lecture	Lecture presented by Dadang Christanto on his art practice	Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville
5 Dec	Floor talk	Exhibition floor talk presented by lead curator Maria-Wronska Friend	Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville
8 Dec	Information Session	<i>Shoot from the Hip: Copyright Matters</i> , an informative talk on copyright issues by Arts Law solicitor Jo Teng	Pinnacles Gallery, Riverway Arts Centre, 20 Village Boulevard, Thuringowa Central
10 Dec	Exhibition Opening	Walkabout: Annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts student exhibition	Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville
11 Dec	Family Public Program	Lomo portraits under the Rain Trees. Have your portrait taken under the scenic Riverway Rain Trees using a Diana 35mm camera. \$15 gets you 3 negatives and one photo printed at 13 x 10 inches on matt photo paper – a unique Christmas gift!	Pinnacles Gallery, Riverway Arts Centre, 20 Village Boulevard, Thuringowa Central
14 Dec	Lecture	After 5 Access lecture on the batik collection of Mrs Jacqueline Pember Hering	Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville
18 Dec	Exhibition Opening	<i>BOOM TOWN</i> , an exhibition by the Kelso Art Group inspired by the booming development of Townsville	YOUR SPACE, Library foyer at the Thuringowa Civic Centre

Date	Event Style	Title / Details	Place
10 Jan	Combined Art Exhibition	Townsville Art Society Gallery members are holding a combined exhibition and sale. This combined exhibition will showcase the talent and diversity of its members. Exhibiting until 28 Jan	Townsville Art Society Art on Kings, 203 Kings Road, Pimlico
15 Jan	Family Public Program	<i>SUMMER SPECTACULAR Kids' ART on TOUR - 21st Century: Art in the First Decade</i> . Free day of activities as part of the Kids' Summer Spectacular Festival. QAG's 21st Century on Tour will feature artist-developed projects and interactive activities for children and families	Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville
21 Jan	Exhibition opening	Drift collaborative with studio 2 artists and Harry Martin, Marion Gaemers, Gail Kelly, Jasmine Martin	Studio 2, Flinders St west
21 Jan	Visual art exhibition	<i>Buried Light</i> Robyn Sweeney and Bernadette Boscacci explore expressions of time, earth and beyond. Exhibiting until 27 Feb	Main Space, Umbrella Studio Contemporary Art, 482 Flinders Street, Townsville


December

Time	Cost	Contact
6pm	FREE	47243953 sylviaditchurn@bigpond.com.au
7pm	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
4pm	FREE	4773 8871 pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au
10.30am	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
11.30am	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
6pm – 8pm	FREE	4773 8871 pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au
7pm	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
10am – 5pm	FREE	4773 8871 pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au
6pm	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
2pm	FREE	4773 8871 pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au

January

continues on next page



Time	Cost	Contact
Sun, Sat, Mon 10am–2pm, Tues–Fri 9–4pm	FREE	47250250
10am–2pm	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
7:30pm	FREE	www.studio2townsville.org
Monday – Friday 9–5pm Sunday 9–1pm	FREE	4772 7109 trainee@umbrella.org.au



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www.townsville.qld.gov.au/services/departments/cip/grants/cultural/index#RADF

A Blend^{of} Difference

Linda Huff & Jenny Finn

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at Art on Kings



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 203 Kings Rd, Pimlico
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 Opening Hours:
 Sat–Mon 10–2pm
 Tues–Fri 9–4pm

Art Guide for SUMMER

Exhibitions

Performances / Talks

Workshops

Date	Event Style	Title / Details
21 Jan	Visual art exhibition	<i>Access Space</i> Mary Fokes explores the relationship between contemporary art and music with mixed media works on canvas. Exhibiting until 27 Feb
21 Jan	Visual art exhibition	<i>N Twine</i> Selena Smith investigates the ways we entwine with trees in this mixed media installation. Exhibiting until 27 Feb
28 Jan —5 Feb	Musical	WEST SIDE STORY
30 Jan	Art Exhibition	Re-Cre8Tiv Recycled 3D Art by Sandra Elton. Sandra works with recycled materials to create stunning works of Art. Exhibiting until 25 Feb
30 Jan	workshop	<i>Artistically challenged workshop.</i> Drawing for those who are pre-beginner

Date	Event Style	Title / Details
5 Feb	Exhibition Opening	Urban DK, an exhibition that investigates the role of street art in institutional art spaces by five artists from the RUN Collective
9 Feb	Exhibition Opening	<i>Conversation with Castle Hill</i> , an exhibition by Gabriel Smith that investigates the sense of belonging to the land and how this relates to self identity
11 Feb	Exhibition Opening	<i>The Promised Land: The Art of Lawrence Daws</i> . A major touring exhibition that celebrates the life and career of long-time Glasshouse Mountains resident and iconic Australian painter, Lawrence Daws
14 Feb	Closing Date	<i>STRAND EPHEMERA VI</i> . Closing date for proposals to be received.
15 Feb	Exhibition opening	<i>Heavenly Reef</i> . Open call for artists to exhibit with us at the studio, Registration open from 1 Dec 2010
18 Feb	Exhibition Opening	On and Off the Road: exhibition by prominent Queensland artist Ian Smith, featuring works made since 2001, all dealing with his interest in depicting the experiences, stories and views of road travel.
27 Feb	Art Exhibition	<i>Inkspiration</i> – By Sylvia Hewitt Exhibiting until 25 March

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NOW

Place	Time	Cost	Contact
Access Space, Umbrella Studio Contemporary Art, 482 Flinders Street, Townsville	Mon–Fri 9–5pm Sunday 9–1pm	FREE	4772 7109 trainee@umbrella.org.au
Vault Space, Umbrella Studio Contemporary Art, 482 Flinders Street, Townsville	Mon–Fri 9–5pm Sunday 9–1pm	FREE	4772 7109 trainee@umbrella.org.au
Townsville Civic Theatre	8pm Fri/Sat Tues–Sat MAT 2pm Sat 29	\$40 \$35 \$25	Civic Theatre 4727 9797
Townsville Art Society, Art on Kings, 203 Kings Road, Pimlico	Sun–Mon 10–2pm Tues–Fri 9–4pm	FREE	4725 0250
Studio 2, Flinders St West	9am–12pm	\$40	0407 290 742

February

Place	Time	Cost	Contact
Pinnacles Gallery, Riverway Arts Centre, 20 Village Boulevard, Thuringowa Central	4pm	FREE	4773 8871 pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au
YOUR SPACE, Library foyer at the Thuringowa Civic Centre	2pm	FREE	4773 8871 pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au
Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville	7pm	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville.	5pm	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
Studio 2, Flinders St West	7pm	\$10 to exhibit FREE to view	www.studio2townsville.org or 0407290742
Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Cnr Denham St & Flinders Mall, Townsville	7pm	FREE	4727 9011 ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
Townsville Art Society Art on Kings, 203 Kings Road, Pimlico	Sat–Mon 10–2pm Tues–Fri 9am–4pm	FREE	47250250

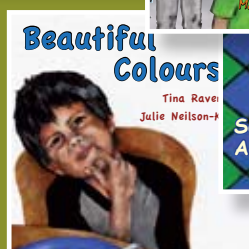
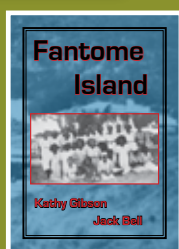
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Jill O'Sullivan, T-O Mount Isa, Courtesy of the artist



Jill O'Sullivan, T-O Cloncurry, Courtesy of the artist

Jill O'Sullivan

THE ART OF CHOROGRAPHY



Jill O'Sullivan, Courtesy of Jacqui Sock

Standing with Jill O'Sullivan on a Welsh hillside soaking up the atmosphere surrounding the Neolithic burial chamber that is Pentre Ifan, near Newport on the Cardigan coast, surmising on the beliefs and actions of these early inhabitants of Wales, it was easy to understand her current academic focus and the reason she has travelled to the United Kingdom.

Jill, who is a well-known member of the arts community in Townsville, firstly as a student and later as a tutor and lecturer, graduated with Honours from James Cook University (JCU) in 2000.

Having majored in printmaking, Jill went on to complete her Masters in the same

discipline. In both cases, her focus centred on the figure and its place in its environment over time and it was this interest that has continued to feature in her later studies.

I asked Jill to briefly describe her PhD research. Her answer throws light on a subject I found both new and extremely interesting.

'My PhD research focus is to establish the art of Chorography as a visual literacy of place in historical and contemporary art. Chorography was defined by Ptolemy in 149 AD as a qualitative map like art that is an unmeasured descriptor of place and its tangible and intangible elements,

and thus an art that could only be done by artists. My practice is a series of Chorographs (drawings and prints) that present a qualitative mapping of place.'

Certainly her topic was interesting enough to result in an invitation to speak at the prestigious Oxford University in England, not once but twice, the first to present her paper 'Chorography: Reflections on its place in visual literacy and creative arts', in 2009 at the 3rd Global Visual Literacies Conference at Mansfield College, Oxford, and, most recently 'The contemporary visual literacy of mapped place: chorographic directions, links and analogies', at the 4th Global Visual Literacies Conference.

The latter paper discussed influences and directions of choreography in contemporary art, while the earlier paper referred more to the history of choreography and its lack of recognition in present-day arts practice. Presentations from these conferences are to be included in both an eBook and a hard copy version to be published in late 2010.

Jill describes choreography as 'a pictorial and qualitative map-like descriptor and visual language that conceptually describes the many components of a specified place, be they physical and/or metaphysical. Thus, artists over the centuries have continuously interpreted, mapped and aesthetically integrated one or more of the actual, theological, historical, theoretical, iconic and cultural attributes of place and time.'

It is a way of mapping not devoted to topographical mark-making or the usual symbols associated with map-making but rather associated with those things that define place in the minds of the people whose place it is. It is the unconscious symbolism contained in the historical perceptions of those people and how these relate to the lay of the land. The way in which these things become entwined to form a visual, cerebral and, at times, spiritual view of a place is the essence of choreography.

Wondering how Jill had managed to achieve what to many artists would be a pipedream, I asked her how her trip was funded.

'My research is funded by a Federal RTS grant that covers HECS fees, JCU minimum resources grant, and self-funding. I did win a \$5000 faculty research grant (based on Grade Point Average) at the beginning of my candidature.'

JCU also paid for Jill's accommodation and conference fees, although she was required to fund her own airfares.

Asked if this was her only experience presenting on her chosen topic, it was no surprise to hear that interest had indeed been shown in her research earlier.

'I have done a number of presentations at JCU on my research. The most recent was at the LBCA Faculty day 'Celebrating graduate research for a brighter future 2010'. I also did a brief overview of my research at a post-graduate conference at Sydney University in late 2008.'

I asked her what the highlights of her trip were and whether this trip was also the highlight of her arts career. The answer gave further insight into what makes Jill tick.

'The highlight of the conference was the interest and related discussion taken in my paper. For me, it confirmed that my research was indeed seen to be worthwhile in an international academic conference. The highlight of my artistic career? [There] Have been quite a few indeed, but being invited to China in 2003 (thanks to Anne Lord) to take part

in an exhibition there, was certainly one of the most outstanding. Highlights of my last trip—to name but a few: the wonderful map exhibition at the British Library in London, Henry Moore at Tate Britain, Loch Ness, York [and] Gloucester Cathedral.'

Jill's diligence and adherence to her field of interest, together with her devotion to her arts practice, has resulted in a lifestyle that would be the envy of many emerging artists. I asked her what her advice would be to those following in her footsteps.

'Never give up, take any opportunities that come your way and be passionate about what you do.'

Certainly, this is the attitude that has resulted in the journey that Jill O'Sullivan currently enjoys. I asked her what turns her future might take and the answer was no surprise.

'Sleep!' was her initial answer but on reflection she concluded: 'The occasional artist-in-residence program appeals.'

It seems the sphere of arts practice still holds much to be explored for Jill O'Sullivan, and a lust for travel has found its way into what is already a successful and highly desirable lifestyle for any artist. The future remains to be seen but I, for one, would not be surprised to find Jill back in the wilds of Wales, standing at the foot of Pentre Ifan, exploring ways of conveying what she sees into her world of choreography.

THE ROLE OF WRITERS GROUPS IN THE COMPUTER AGE

LORI HURST

President of Writers in Townsville Society Inc.

All art expresses the artist's world view, albeit through differing mediums. Writing is an art form whereby the author creates a picture using words. A common misnomer is that a writer's lot is a lonely road. This conjures up images of a cramped little room where the writer bangs away on an old typewriter or spends hours in isolation making reams of notes with only their muse, when she chooses to appear, for

company. A muse can be remarkably unreliable and temperamental.

The reality is, however, that it's not a lonely road—it's a super-highway. While there is no substitute for talent, knowledge of the craft of writing and absolute dedication, the Internet has opened doorways into hitherto untapped resources. Still, the marvels of modern technology do not come unencumbered.

The market has become saturated with writers, talented and otherwise, all fiercely competing for publication. It is painful in the extreme when you select a book, believing the blurb on the back cover, only to discover in the first chapter that the author must have been published due to nepotism. Meanwhile, your writing room wall is papered with rejection slips. An author needs every bit of weaponry in their arsenal if they

are to succeed in the battle to be published.

A professional approach includes targeting your market, selling yourself via a covering letter, and a well-constructed synopsis, one that grabs the reader. While none of this guarantees you success, it does give you an edge. Just to add to the maze that must be negotiated, there's the dilemma of whether to approach an agent or a publisher, to self-publish or to go for online publication.

Writing, of course, is not limited to novels. It also includes non-fiction, which is big in the current market, short stories for competitions or magazine articles, screenplays, poetry and biographies. Whatever your choice of style or genre, you need to learn how to avoid the pitfalls and take advantage of the opportunities.

However, long before being faced with the dilemma of how to get published, many would-be writers can't get past the starting barrier. How do you start? Where do you start? In short, they need a push in the right direction. An abundance of books are available, as well as sites on the Internet, to help develop the craft of writing. Some sites allow you to submit your work for comment or publication. You can benefit

enormously by taking advantage of any or all of the above.

If all of this information has added to your confusion, don't panic. There is a lifeline—writers groups. Online writers groups are available but, if you are fortunate enough to have access to a local group, you have an extremely valuable resource. Don't make the assumption that you won't fit in or be up to the standard required. The major prerequisite, whatever your level of accomplishment, is a strong desire to write. Many successful authors have kick-started their careers by being involved with a writers group. This could be you.

Firstly, you will be in the company of those who share your desire to succeed as an author. Secondly, you have the benefit of engaging with others who can offer you informed critique. It's all very well having Aunt Mavis or your mother read your work and tell you, 'that's really lovely dear'. But the reality is editors don't care about your feelings. Thirdly, and what I believe to be of paramount importance, is the motivation gained from sharing in fellow writers' endeavours and successes.

Writers in Townsville Society Inc. (better known as WITS) has been a source of inspiration for local writers for three

decades. The ethos of our writers group is to encourage, motivate and develop the craft of writing. This is accomplished via an exchange of ideas amidst a sense of camaraderie. As well as guest speakers and the opportunity to gain knowledge via workshops promoted by WITS, as members of Queensland Writers Centre we have access to all their resources.

Over the past two years we have encouraged WITS members to participate in performance readings at local libraries. This provides an excellent opportunity to publicly promote your work. Over the years, WITS has produced many anthologies. The latest, titled *T'ville*, is a fantasy with a local setting. *T'ville* will be available for purchase shortly. Our membership is comprised of writers from a diversity of backgrounds, ages and genres, with one common attribute—a passion for the written word. Some individuals write because it allows them to express their ideas, in whatever form. However, if you are among those who have a burning desire to be recognised (i.e. published), then being part of a writers group can provide you with the tools necessary to succeed in an increasingly competitive market.

Further information: 4780 4731
witsnq.blogspot.com

RICHARD III

BRIAN EDMOND

Richard III by William Shakespeare.
Performed by Full Throttle Theatre
Company at Queens Gardens, North
Ward.

Due to the unfortunate demise of Tropic Sun theatre, there was a real risk that the tradition of producing Shakespeare in Townsville would not continue. Fortunately for the good folk of Townsville, who are brave enough to sample something a little out of the ordinary, that tradition has continued under the guise of 'Shakespeare Under the Stars', driven by director

Terri Brabon & Brendan O'Connor of Full Throttle Theatre Company, with particular support from Lorna Hempstead, Ray Dickson and Bernie Lanigan.

For those who have not been to one of these shows before, they are performed outdoors at Queens Garden, with meals available at interval and a bar too. So you really can't go wrong.

Although the program did have a short version of the story—together with a cute photographic diagram of



Brendan O'Connor & James Raggatt in *Richard III*,
Photographed by Robin Gauld

the family relationships—I still found who was who, and who was on whose side, pretty confusing. I don't consider that to be a criticism of this production but, rather, is a legacy of the fact that when Shakespeare wrote this play, his audience would have had an intimate knowledge of the relationships after the War of the Roses. At the time of writing



Carla Lejarraga & Brendan O'Connor in *Richard III*,
Photographed by Robin Gauld

the play, Shakespeare would have been very sensitive to the fact that the monarch of the time of writing the play, Elizabeth I, was the descendant of King Henry VII (who overthrew Richard III). So the 'facts' of this play need to be viewed in that context.

But it is not the historical 'truths' that we as a modern audience are fascinated by but, rather, it is the murderous, charismatic, repellent and manipulating Duke of Gloucester—Richard III—convincingly realised by Brendan O'Connor—that sucks us in.

Essentially, Richard plots to get rid of anyone who would block his path to the throne of England. He takes us into his confidence and delights in his scheming and ability to persuade others to do what he wants. A high point of this is Richard's ability to persuade Lady Anne (Carla Lejarraga) to marry him (despite Henry VI being overthrown by Richard III's family and Lady Anne being the widow of Prince Edward, the son of Henry VI and having every reason to hate Richard). Lejarraga also projected a convincing melancholy quality in the second half of the play.

With regular monologues that are directly delivered to the audience, O'Connor was in his element, taking us into his confidence and 'borrowing' audience members' wine as a bonus. He was funny, disturbing and engaging.

Also unsettling was Terri Brabon as Mad Margaret, with her prophecies and curses. At the end of the run her voice seemed tired—but it is a huge job directing and taking on a large role too.

I enjoyed John Goodson as Buckingham—Richard's right hand man; he had good presence and connection with the text. Bernie Lanigan as Hastings was effective and his resignation to his fate when he realised he was to be murdered was well conveyed. The mother of Richard—Duchess of York (Beth Honeycombe)—had the necessary *gravitas*, although in this outdoor venue I found she was difficult to hear at times. Sandra Neal as Elizabeth—the mother of the two young princes murdered on the orders of Richard—although a little shrill at times, was totally believable in her desperation to protect her sons and love for them. Paul Ransom as Tyrell—murderer—was totally believable. James Raggatt as Richmond (later to become Henry VII), although a little awkward in the first half, found his feet in the second half and exemplifies the benefit of shows such as this giving less-experienced actors the opportunity to work with some professional actors. James will definitely have grown from this experience. Anna Wallace as Princess Elizabeth was also terrific.

As usual, the use of music was a strength, with underscoring for most

scenes and references such as 'Send in the Clowns' and (although I am not sure of the song title) a song with the repeated refrain of 'The Show Must Go On'. This last number was integral to a particularly effective juxtaposition between Richard dining while the princes were murdered. Also very good was the nightmare scene where Richard's past victims came back to haunt him.

There were regular moments where Richard came across as a master of ceremonies and/or clown or a vaudeville star (even with possible references to *A Clockwork Orange*). These aspects worked well but I felt they didn't work as a coherent whole. This may have been because the concept was not pushed as far as it could have been or, perhaps, because it was not able to be fully realised with the material. I would have liked to have seen this pushed further and had it imbue the whole piece.

The young people were great—Taylah Smith, Joshua Smith, Adin Whitton and Emma Smith. Emma (who was 4 years old at the time) was very good in the last *Thriller*-inspired dance number—how good was her choreography??!!

All in all, a good night at the theatre and I look forward to the next one.

BLACK INK PRESS

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF INDIGENOUS PUBLISHING

JEANIE ADAMS



Singer-songwriter Patrick Levi entertains, Image courtesy of Black Ink Press

Queensland's only Indigenous book publisher is in Townsville, and it has just celebrated ten years of publishing. The Black Ink Project began with a series of workshops in 2000 and now Black Ink Press has 45 books published.

As a small grassroots publishing company, Black Ink Press is strongly based in the community of north Queensland, yet now has authors and illustrators in six states.

It goes out of its way to train and mentor emerging writers and artists in order to create contemporary illustrated books, especially for young readers. Some of these creative people are in rural and remote communities, where writing and illustrating workshops and residencies are run.

Several published Indigenous writers and illustrators, and a few new ones, helped Black Ink Press to celebrate its 10th birthday at the Open Day on Friday, 8 October, at its office at 190 Hervey's Range Road, behind Shalom College. The friendly day was an opportunity for authors to meet each other and meet the staff.

Two groups of young Indigenous students were an eager audience for them too, appreciating their special privilege as children Australia-wide who find these books captivating and, after all, who doesn't love to meet a real live author?

One guest of honour was Glee Sellin, who came up from Biloela, but her

illustrator sister Mary Tolputt lives too far away in Kalgoorlie.

Another was Esther Fischer from Cardwell, author of two books, who brought along her grandson Jakobi, who is the subject of *Jakobi & Nan*, her first book. Esther has a commitment to creating books that break the cycle of family violence. She is also developing skills as an illustrator. She has become a mentor to other emerging writers.

Fay Gee Hoy's first book was illustrator Jaquanna Elliott's third. *Over the Back Fence* was launched on 30 September by Relationships Australia. Robbie Paul is working on his second set of illustrations for Bridget Priman's next book, *Biddy's Race*.

Monique Russell, author of *Sam's Fishing Adventure*, set in the Torres Straits, showed work-in-progress on the bright illustrations for her next book, *Sissy's Secret*, and that book's writer, Althea McKeown, was here for a flying visit from Horn Island.

Yalga-binbi Institute's large new training room looked beautiful with its walls covered with visual delights. Outside were hundreds of photos of people and events from ten years' history of the Black Ink Project.

Inside, a selection of original artworks from twelve illustrated books graced the walls. Artists represented included Jaquanna Elliott and Gavin Delacour, well-known locally. Illustrator of Esther Fischer's two books, Kerensa McCann,

had her original watercolours on show. The exhibition of artworks was selected and beautifully mounted by Gabriel Smith, with the assistance of her mother Maxine.

These works remain the property of the individual artists, and many are available for sale but some have been acquired by Townsville City Libraries in a valuable collection.

Black Ink Press is part of the Congress Community Development and Education Unit (CCDEU Ltd), an activity of the Uniting Aboriginal & Islander Christian Congress. Clients of the sister organisation, Stagpole Street Drug & Alcohol Rehab Unit, assisted in setting up, and students of Shalom College attended.

Entertainment was provided by singer-songwriter Patrick Levi's contemporary songs and Bruce Adams' traditional music. And delicious catering was provided by the talented women of Townsville Multicultural Support Group.

For further information
(07) 4773 0770
info@blackinkpress.com.au
www.blackinkpress.com.au

What's the difference?

(Short fiction) KERRY PARKE

It's the most unimportant things that make us individuals or different. He has looked at buying new bedside tables.

'What on earth would you be spending money on an item like that for?', I say. 'There's heaps of other things to buy before them.'

I guess they are looking a little tired and dated but they are solid timber. Not like the scrappy tacked together ones you buy today for the same price we paid 30 years ago. I remember the excitement when we replaced our cardboard boxes topped with tin trays and covered with a cloth or cheap remnant scrounged from a sale at Carroll's or Dollar Curtains (when curtains did only cost a dollar). We were so clever at throwing junk together to get by. I still look at cardboard boxes and think what I could use them for. Strong little tomato cases stack on top of one another and make excellent cupboards for just about anything. They cost nothing.

I remember it was \$125 each we paid for our bedside tables back then; I think it was at Walton's at Nathan Plaza when Nathan Plaza was not Stocklands.

'They are solid', I recall, justifying the expense.

But now he wants to buy new ones!

I have covered the wear and tear with a thick table runner and I think they look quite swish. Red and gold; very regal. I have had a parade of colours over the years as curtains change and moods of rooms are tweaked.

The damage rings from slopped mugs of tea are there, still unable to be polished out, as well small scratches from maybe a toy being run across it or over the bumps where the draws slide. I seem to remember a tiny boy's eyes lighting up at the sound of a crash from Lego tumbling to the floor (a house or car crashing down a mountain). It has faint marks from a pencil too; a budding artists canvas!

My side is nearly always covered in books ... at least three, which do a daily shuffle depending on what takes my fancy. There is always room for my mug of tea though, oh, and my glasses in later years.

The lamps change too. The bases break and we're always left with one, so changing them is a more frequent event. They don't last long, a couple of years at most and that gives a nice decorative change. They are gold and glass touch lamps from Homecraft at present, bought on sale, of course, (still thrifty) but we have had alabaster. They break too.

In the bottom draw I have items that have been there since we bought them. Silk scarves that I would never wear but can't get rid of. My top draw is for tapes ... all lined up ready to be picked on those sleepless nights when I am too tired to read but my mind's light still burns. A phone, of course, on my side and, as a true writer, a tiny vase with pens all standing to attention ready for duty if I need to jot down ideas and thoughts. One other item that takes pride of place is a small mirror with 'Ode to Mum' etched on it, a gift from my son. My thought when he gave it to me was that he really must love me.

It was suggested I put some of my things away.

'It looks a bit messy most of the time', *he* had said.

It could be a whole lot worse; I have a stash of stuff patiently waiting in a knitter's basket, you know, one of those timber and cloth folding jobs, full of treasures ready and waiting that don't fit on my bedside table!

Our bedside tables have greeted us every morning, mine especially with that cuppa. I have been known to ring and ask, 'Why did you leave me a cold cup of tea?' He still made it just in case 'his princess' woke.

I can't imagine my bedside table at the Salvos or in a garage sale just yet. I can't imagine them beside some other couple's bed, my memories being mixed with theirs. It doesn't seem right ... not yet. I blush at the thought it might talk! All those lustful romps before kids, those arguments settled and sealed with warm and loving caresses; the toddlers comforted during long sleep-deprived nights, convalescing after an illness and chatting with troubled teens ... all witnessed by my bedside tables.

No ... I am not ready to part with them yet ... some other time maybe, but not now.

The funny thing is I have noticed that his side is not that much different from mine. Snooping in his bottom draw I found an old radio that doesn't work, hasn't for years. There are dozens of instruction booklets on gadgets that have passed through and are now at the tip. Why the instruction manual is still around beats me, but I guess they are related to those silk scarves of mine!

I wonder if we did get new bedside tables, whether we would transfer the things from our old ones into the new. Probably!

Aliens in our home

(Short fiction) SUSAN MATTOCKS

We're standing on the 'ring'; a small roundabout, covered in grass, outside my childhood home in Kent, England.

The 'ring' graced the top end of our quiet road of semi-detached houses and was the gathering point for us kids. It was pretty much 'our' ring and we used to encircle it, territorially, on our bikes, pretending we were riding horses. My horse was called 'Spangles'. My two sisters and I didn't particularly aspire to horse riding (and our parents certainly couldn't afford it) but our friends in the street had riding lessons and so our bikes were duly named after the ponies they rode. We even used to rise up and down in our saddles.

It's now 2009 and I'm standing on this ring, with memories swirling around me like crazy school girls on horse-bikes, studying the familiar façade of my old home. Next to me are my two gigantesque, teenage boys, bored, disinterested and totally oblivious to the ghosts of 1970, encircling them in mustard, crimplene trouser suits and pink hot pants.

I can see that it's still *our* house, even though a room has been built in the attic and the front garden wall, sacrilegiously, knocked down. But dad's porch is still standing. The porch he built ... small, cramped, but still a porch and an important status symbol in the 1970s.

Whilst I'm pleased that the new owners have retained my dad's workmanship, I can't refrain from a lip curl of disgust on viewing the ravaged and desecrated front garden. What was once a stretch of lawn, where daisies grew and children played, is now ... a concrete car park.

I'm not immune to the warped reasoning behind this blight. These houses were built in the 1930s when cars were few and parking plentiful. My husband and I had experienced, firsthand, the trials of trying to find somewhere to park in my mother-in-law's narrow, terraced street. But even so, the idea of knocking down *our* wall, built by my Uncle Joe, a wall that we used to cling to whilst our legs splayed out from under us in roller

skates, or lean against in summer, whilst idly licking ice creams, was appalling. Especially given that there was a fine, double garage, built by my uncle and dad, at the rear of the house!

I click away with my camera, hoping that my exaggerated lingering and enthusiastic photo-taking will prompt the aliens, living in *my* house, to invite us inside for a cup of tea and a tour. When this doesn't happen I drag my husband and teenage sons 'up the alley' to visit the rear of the house.

The brick garage, built all those years ago, is still handsome and viable. I issue photographic instructions to my husband to capture various images of me, from different angles, as I pose in the pot-holed, weed-strewn alley outside a very plain, white-painted, garage door ... a door that is extremely dear to me. I caress its surface ... something I hadn't dared to attempt at the front of the house for fear of being arrested.

I remember the day the garage was built. Fate had smiled on me and I was the only child allowed to stand in the unset concrete in my wellington boots. I remember grinning smugly from ear to ear whilst my sisters, brother and our neighbourhood friends watched enviously. It was a great moment ... until I fell over, getting wet concrete on my hands and, fearful that I would turn into a statue, began to cry. I was quickly picked up and unceremoniously dumped in the garden ... my fifteen minutes of fame over.

We return to the front of the house. My heart aches with desire to go inside and run my fingers over the workmanship of my late father, a shipwright and carpenter, who beautified our home with paternal love and a craftsman's skill. Like any artist, the essence of who he was is present in his work ... and I long to breathe it.

Over the years dad knocked down walls and chimneys, took out fireplaces, constructed built-in robes, cabinets and cupboards and even installed a tiny toilet (with washbasin!) under the stairs. He touched every corner and crevice of

this house ... but his *pièce de résistance* was the beautiful, wooden staircase with matching, polished wood handrail, the latter having been salvaged from a ship and expertly restored by him. It was a thing of great beauty, varnished to a rich sheen of dark molasses with feminine curves and waves decorating the nub at each end. The new owners' churlish refusal to invite me inside meant they would remain forever ignorant of the origins of my father's beautiful legacy.

I sigh ... I guess it doesn't really matter ... my family knows and that's what's important. Besides, whether the aliens like it or not, we are *all* still in there ... every single one of us. An eyelash behind the skirting board, dead skin under the carpets, a toe nail laying quietly under the floorboards and a child's, baby-fine, blond hair captured forever in concrete. Forensically speaking, we own the place ... no matter how enthusiastically they brandish the vacuum cleaner. Our primitive etchings and drawings, just as important as any prehistoric cave painting, are scrawled on walls behind wallpaper, leaving secret messages for future generations and reaffirming our claim on the very rock of this house.

Deep down, I know that this will always be *our* home, no matter how many subsequent 'owners' pass through on their transitory journey. I also know that our territory has been well and truly marked. With four children, under the age of four at one point, regularly filling their nappies and peeing their pants, of that, I'm certain!

Train

(Poetry) PHIL HEANG

Train 1

There's a train going nowhere.
People are lined up for seven city
blocks,
waiting to board.

The station platform is crowded,
all ages with their bedding,
a few belongings,
waiting patiently.

The lucky ones are on board
sitting, patiently waiting,
but even those seven blocks away
feel privileged.

The train's brand new,
or it was
many years ago.
It's never been anywhere,
done anything,
except sit and wait,
to go nowhere.

Train 2

Carriages are wooden,
the ones with the sign on the toilet
saying,
'Please Refrain from Using Toilet
Whilst Train is Standing
in Station.'
People do,
refrain, that is.
What else is there to do?

In the station canteen
a middle-aged man
eats meat pies
drowned in peas.
and every so often asks,
'Any news of departure
time?'

The waitress shrugs,
she's third generation
canteen worker
and well versed by
mother and
grandmother
in the art of silent reply.

Train 3

Sometimes rumours
whip and whirl
through waiting passengers.

A departure
a time set,
cancelled.
Disappointment falls
like
rain
on
an
outdoor
wedding.

But the wise ones know—
when you're waiting
for a train
to nowhere
it's not the journey
that matters,
it's the sojourn.

Strand Ephemera VI Calling for Artists

For entry forms, conditions of entry, selection
criteria, site images and further information visit:
www.townsville.qld.gov.au

or contact Pam Lane
☎ (07) 4727 9679
✉ pam.lane@townsville.qld.gov.au

or visit the gallery reception desk

Proposals to be received by 5pm Monday 14 February 2011

Artists are invited to submit proposals for
Strand Ephemera VI. Held along Townsville's
2km recreational beachside promenade, *Strand
Ephemera 2011* is from 2 – 12 September.

Numerous and variable sites are available to artists.
Strand Ephemera VI offers a major prize of \$10,000,
and a \$2,000 People's Choice Award. Prizes are
non-acquisitive.



Adrian John Davis, *Tidal Mass*, spotted gum, steel and rubber, included in *Strand Ephemera 2003*

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